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MYTHOLOGY OF THE MISSION INDIANS.<sup>1</sup>

## I. SAN LUISEÑO CREATION MYTH.

IN the beginning all was empty space. Ké-vish-a-ták-vish was the only being. This period was called Óm-ai-yá-mai signifying emptiness, nobody there. Then came the time called Há-ruh-rúy, upheaval, things coming into shape. Then a time called Chu-tu-tái, the falling of things downward; and after this, Yu-vaí-to-vaí, things working in darkness without the light of sun or moon. Then came the period Tul-múl Pu-shún, signifying that deep down in the heart or core of earth things were working together.

Then came Why-yaí Pee-vaí, a gray glimmering like the whiteness of hoar frost; and then, Mit-aí Kwai-raí, the dimness of twilight. Then came a period of cessation, Na-kaí Ho-wai-yaí, meaning things at a standstill.<sup>2</sup>

Then Ké-vish-a-ták-vish made a man, Túk-mit, the Sky; and a woman, To-maí-yo-vit, the Earth. There was no light, but in the darkness these two became conscious of each other.

"Who are you?" asked the man.

"I am To-maí-yo-vit. And you?"

"I am Túk-mit."

"Then you are my brother."

"You are my sister."

By her brother the Sky the Earth conceived and became the Mother of all things. Her first-born children were, in the order of their birth, See-vat and Pá-ve-ut,<sup>3</sup> Ush-la and Pik-la, Ná-na-chel and Patch'-haye, Tópal and Tam'-yush.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This paper has been communicated as part of the Proceedings of the California Branch of the American Folk-Lore Society.

<sup>2</sup> Boscana alludes to the periods of time in the Creation Myth which he records, the story to-day being analogous to that which he obtained from the Indians eighty years ago. He says: "We have the six productions of the mother of Ouiot, corresponding to the six days of the creation of the world." I did not obtain this series thus distinctly stated, but on the other hand the introductory periods of creation were clearly named and defined. Whether these eight periods show any trace of Christian influence I am not as yet prepared to say. The myth in its entirety is strictly primitive. Only the slightest traces of any external influence could be suspected.

<sup>3</sup> Pá-ve-ut is the name given to the sacred pointed stones of chipped flint, etc., used, not for arrow points, but for insertion in the end of the sword-shaped staff carried by the chief in the religious ceremonials. Boscana gives as the second production of Mother Earth "rocks and stones of all kinds, particularly flints for their arrows."

<sup>4</sup> Tam'-yush, or Tam-ish (obscure sound) is the name for the sacred stone bowls,

Then came forth all other things, people, animals, trees, rocks, and rivers, but not as we see them now. All things then were people.

But at first they were heavy and helpless and could not move about, and they were in darkness, for there was no light. But when the Sun was born he gave a tremendous light which struck the people into unconsciousness, or caused them to roll upon the ground in agony; so that the Earth-Mother, seeing this, caught him up and hid him away for a season; so then there was darkness again.

After the Sun was born there came forth another being called Chung-itch'-nish (spelled Chin-ig-chin-ich by Boscana), a being of power, whose voice sounded as soon as he was born, while all the others rolled helplessly upon the ground, unable to utter a word. The others were so terrified by his appearance that the Earth-Mother hid him away, and ever since he has remained invisible.

The rattlesnake was born at this time, a monster without arms or legs.

When all her children were born, the Earth-Mother left the place and went to Ech'-a-mo N'oy-a-mo. The people rolled, for like new-born babies they could not walk. They began then to crawl on hands and knees, and they talked this way: Chák-o-lá-le, Wá-wa, Tá-ta. This was all that they could say. For food they ate clay. From there they moved to Kak-wé-mai Po-lá-la, then to Po-és-kak Po-lá-lak.

They were growing large now and began to recognize each other. Then the Earth-Mother made the sea so that her children could bathe in it, and so that the breeze from the sea might fill their lungs, for until this time they had not breathed.

Then they moved farther to a place called Na-ché-vo Po-mé-sa-vo, a sort of a cañon which was too small for their abiding-place; so they returned to a place called Tem-ech'-va Tem-eck'-o, and this place people now call Temecula, for the Mexicans changed the Indian name to that.

Here they settled while everything was still in darkness. All this time they had been travelling about without any light.

The Earth-Mother had kept the sun hidden away, but now that the people were grown large enough and could know each other she took the Sun out of his hiding-place, and immediately there was light. They could all see each other; and while the Sun was standing there among them they discussed the matter and decided that he

incorrectly called mortars, hollowed out of solid rounded stones, large and small, used in the toloache fiesta for mixing and distributing the drink, and placed upon the ground in the sacred house (called temple by Boscana) during the religious ceremonies. They were painted with bright colors within and without; and when not in use were carefully buried from sight in places known only to the religious leaders.

must go east and west and give light all over the world ; so all of them raised their arms to the sky three times, and three times cried out Cha-cha-cha (unspellable guttural), and he rose from among them and went up to his place in the sky.

After this they remained at Temecula, but the world was not big enough for them, and they talked about it and concluded that it must be made larger. So this was done, and they lived there as before.

It was at Temecula that the Earth-Mother taught her children to worship Chung-itch'-nish. Although he could not be seen, he appointed the Raven to be his messenger, flying over the heads of the people to watch for any who had offended against him. Whenever the Raven flew overhead, they would have a big fiesta and dance.

The bear and the rattlesnake were the chosen avengers for Chung-itch'-nish ; and any who failed to obey would suffer from their bite. When a man was bitten by a rattlesnake it was known that he had offended Chung-itch'-nish, and a dance would be performed with religious ceremonies to beg his forgiveness.

The stone bowls, Tam'-yush, were sacred to his worship ; so were the toloache and mock-orange plants. All the dances are made for his worship, and all the sacred objects, stone pipes, eagle feathers, tobacco, etc., were used in this connection.

## 2. THE NORTH STAR AND THE RATTLESNAKE.

While they were living at Temecula, the rattlesnake was there, and because he had no arms or legs the others would make fun of him. The North Star, especially, who was then a person, was the leader in this abuse. He would fling dirt in his face, throw him down, and drag him about by the hair. So the rattlesnake went to the Earth-Mother and complained of this treatment, wishing to avenge himself on Túk-músh-wút, the North Star. So the Earth-Mother gave the rattlesnake two sharp-pointed sticks with which he might defend himself against any who disturbed him. So the next time when the North Star came and began to torment him, the rattlesnake used the sticks (his fangs) and bit off one of his fingers as you may still see in the sky.<sup>1</sup>

The Earth-Mother further contrived that, in order to make the bite of the rattlesnake effective, it should be followed by three intensely

<sup>1</sup> Starting from the North Star as a centre, there is a vortex of small stars, which in the clear air of the southwest are very plainly seen. They may easily appear as the five fingers of a hand ; a line of three or four stars for the thumb, with several curving lines for the fingers, of which the last, a straight line shorter than the rest, and pointing towards Cassiopeia, is the one bitten off by the rattlesnake.

hot days; and at the present time, when three hot days come in succession, you may know that some man has been bitten by a rattlesnake.

### 3. THE STORY OF OUIOT.<sup>1</sup>

While they were all living at Temecula, there was a man among them who was very wise and knew more than any one living. He taught the people, watched over them, and made provision for their needs, so that he called them all his children. They were not born to him as children, but he stood to them in the relation of a father.

It was the custom for all the people to take a bath every morning. Among them was a beautiful woman whom Ouiot had especially admired. She had a beautiful face and long hair that fell to her feet, completely covering her back. She always went down to the water when no one else was there, and would bathe when no one could see her. Ouiot noticed this and made it a point to watch her one day; and when she jumped into the water, he saw that her back was hollow and flat like that of a frog, and his admiration turned to disgust.

Wa-há-wut, the woman, observed Ouiot and read his thoughts, and she was filled with anger against him. When she told her people of his feelings towards her, they conspired together and said, "We will kill him." So the four of them, Wa-há-wut, Ká-ro-ut, Mórta, and Yó-wish (people then, but later, the frog, the earthworm, the gopher, and a water animal resembling the gopher), combined to destroy him by witchcraft.

As soon as they had finished their work, Ouiot fell sick; and tried in vain to ease his pain, sending north, south, east, and west for remedies, but nothing could avail. He grew so much worse that he lay there helpless, unable to rise. Wa-há-wut and her helpers came and jeered at him, and because he lingered so long in his illness they gave him the name of Ouiot. His real name was Moyla.

Then a man, named Má-wha-la, arose and said, "What is the matter with all of you people? You call yourselves witches, and yet you cannot cure our sick brother, or even determine the cause of his illness."

So the rattlesnake, then a man, and a great witch-doctor, who knew everything, searched north, south, east, and west, trying to find out some way to help Ouiot, or to learn what was the matter with him, but in vain.

And after him another man, the horned toad, equally great as an hechicero, went about searching for a cause or a remedy, trying his best but without success.

Next stood up the road-runner. He examined Ouiot, and searched about among the people to see if any of them had caused his illness, but he could discover nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced wee-ote.

Next came Sa-ka-pé-pe, a great leader, now a tiny bird. He did the same thing. He examined Ouiot and told the people that some one had poisoned him, and that he was going to die.

Ouiot was getting worse all the time, and he called his best friend, Cha-há-mal (the kingbird), a great captain and a very good man, and told him that he had been poisoned, and named the four who had done it, and told him the reason for their hatred of him, and that he soon must die; and to Cha-há-mal alone he disclosed the truth that he would soon return. "Look towards the east for my coming in the early morning," he said. So Cha-há-mal knew the secret.

Then he summoned all the rest of the people that he might give them his last commands; and when all had gathered together, some of his children raised him in their arms so that he could sit up and address them. The tears began to run down his cheeks. Coyote, Blue-fly, and Buzzard crowded about him, and Coyote began licking his tears as if he was thinking already of eating him. So they drove these three away.

Then Ouiot said that his death might come in the first month, Tas-mó-y-mal a-lúc-mal, or in the second part of the first month, Tá-s-mo-y-il mo-kát; but this time passed, and he was still alive. "Perhaps I shall die in the next month, Tów-na-mal a-lúc-mal, or in the second part of it, Tá-wut mo-kát; this also passed, and in like manner he predicted his possible death with the beginning of each month, only to linger through each until the last.

The series is as follows, beginning with the third month: Tów-sun-mal a-lúc-mal, Tów-sa-nal mo-kát; Tó-vuk-mal a-lúc-mal, Tó-vakal mo-kát; Nó-vac-ne-mal a-lúc-mal, Nó-va-nut mo-kát; Pá-ho-y-mal a-lúc-mal, Pá-ho-y-il mo-kát; Ná-y-mo-y-mal a-lúc-mal, Ná-y-mo-y-il mo-kát; Som'-o-y-mal a-lúc-mal, Som'-o-y-il mo-kát.<sup>1</sup>

In the last month he died, and death came into the world. No one had died before, but he will take all along with him.<sup>2</sup>

There was a man (now kangaroo-rat) who made a carrying-net in which to lift Ouiot; and they sent to all four points of the compass for wood, the sycamore, black oak, and white oak, tule, hemlock, and

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for the spelling of these names to Mr. P. S. Sparkman of Rincon (Cal.), whose unpublished dictionary and grammar of the Luiseño language is the only authority extant on the subject. He adds in regard to these names: "It will be seen that the first word of the name given to the first part of each period has the diminutive suffix 'mal' affixed to it, while the second word of the name means thin or lean, therefore this means something like the small, lean part of the period. Mo-kát, the second word of the name given to the second part of each period, means large, therefore the second parts are spoken of as the large parts. But it is not necessary to use the words a-lúc-mal and mo-kát. The other words may be used alone."

<sup>2</sup> "Som" means all.

cedar, to build the funeral pile. They got a hollow log and on the lower half they laid the body, and put the other half of the log above it for a lid ; and after the pile was ready and the fire lighted, the men carried the body in the net that had been prepared, and, going three times about the fire, they laid the body on it.

Meantime Coyote had been sent away first in one direction and then in another, being told to bring fire to light the pile ; but he ran back so quickly that they could not finish their work. "Go to the central point also," they told him, "and go all the way. Do not stop until you get there."

Coyote ran off, but looking back he saw the smoke of the burning already rising up to the sky ; so he turned and came running back with all his might. They took sticks to drive him away, and they stood in a circle close together about the fire to prevent him from approaching it ; but the badger was a little man, and made a break in the circle (illustrated by the two thumbs when the hands are placed together, making a circle of the fingers), and Coyote jumped directly over his head, snatched the heart, the only part of the body that was not consumed, and ran off with it and devoured it.

There was a man among them named Wiskun (now a tiny squirrel), and when Ouiot was burned, he stood up and addressed the people ; and he called the clouds from the mountains to come, and the clouds and fog from the sea to gather and fall in showers upon the earth to blot out all the tracks that Ouiot had made when he moved about upon the earth, so that nothing could be seen.

So the clouds came and it rained heavily.

Then it was told them that in all time to come they must have fiestas for the dead as they had done for Ouiot. And they must begin to kill and eat for food. Until this time they had never eaten flesh or grains, but had lived on clay. And they discussed the matter, and questioned as to who should first be killed. One man after another was chosen but each refused in turn.

While they were talking about this, Tish-mel (the hummingbird) said that he would like to take the eagle's place. He felt that he was a person of importance ; but the people said, No. 'He was a little man, and not fit for that, and they would not have him.

The eagle must be killed at the time of every fiesta, and Ash-wut (the eagle) did not like this. To escape his fate, he went north, south, east, and west ; but there was death for him everywhere, and he came back and gave himself up.<sup>1</sup>

Then they talked about killing the deer. "He is a nice-looking

<sup>1</sup> Comment by the narrator. The eagle never dies. The old one will be there every year. You can catch the young ones by spreading nets for them in the cañons. They are killed for the fiesta without shedding any blood.

man, he would be good for meat." The lion was a strong, powerful man, and he said, "Why do you delay and discuss the matter? This is the way it should be done." So he fell upon the deer and killed him, and all the others that had been selected to be animals were killed at the same time. They turned into different kinds of animals and different kinds of grain, and all the things that we see now in the world.

When they killed the deer, they took the small pointed bones of the leg to use as awls for making baskets. A fine basket was made, and the ashes and bones of Ouiot were placed within it, and they buried the basket in the ground.

While they were burying it, they sang solemn words with groans (grunting expirations), and they danced in this fiesta. This was the first time there had been singing or dancing for the dead. Until this time they had known nothing of it, but after this they knew how to make the fiestas and to sing and dance. The rabbit was the man that sang first, and the crow and the wild goose danced first.

After this fiesta was over they had a big meeting at Temecula, where they were still together, for when they found out that death had come into the world, they did not know what to do, and they discussed the matter.

All those that are now the stars went up in the sky at this time, hoping in that way to escape death; and all things that live in the ground, worms and insects and burrowing animals, went under the ground to hide from death. But the others decided to stay on the earth. They concluded that it might be possible to live so many years and then go back and be young again.

Then they left Temecula and scattered all over just as it is to-day. Now that Ouiot was gone there was no use in staying in their first home. They no longer had a guide or teacher there.

No one knew that Ouiot was to come back, except Cha-há-mal, and early in the morning he would go upon the housetop and call out, "Ouiot is coming back."

"What does he say?" the people wondered.

But they understood when, for the first time, Ouiot rose in the east. They saw the moon rise and they knew it was Ouiot. It was the first time there was any moon, but he has been coming ever since.

After Ouiot died and the people scattered from Temecula, they took the Tam'-yush (sacred stone bowls) with them. They had been people, but they turned into stone bowls when the others became animals, etc.



4. THE STORY OF OUIOT.<sup>1</sup>

There was a village and all the people were together there, and Ouiot was living there with the people. This man became a great teacher and knew more than all the rest of the people. He called all men and women his children. All were naked then, no one wore clothes. At that time there was a woman named Wa-há-wut, who was very handsome. She was of a light complexion, and Ouiot was very proud of her. He called her his daughter. There was a pond where all the people used to go to bathe; and Ouiot was there, and this handsome woman was there bathing, and Ouiot saw that her figure was not handsome. Her back was flat and without flesh.

All the people then were like witches; and this woman could read his thoughts, so she knew that Ouiot thought ill of her. So this woman killed him. She took the spittle of Ouiot and put it in her mouth, and took a frog and hung it up. (This part is obscure.)

Ouiot at once got sick and thin. He knew what was the matter with him, and that this woman was killing him; so he called all the people together, and told them to send for some of the people from the north to help him. So they came. They were the stone bowls (Tam'-yush), and they were people then. They came to see him and to doctor him. They knew what was the matter with him, but they could do nothing to help him.

So then he sent east for some others. They are the stars, Nu-kúlish, and Yung-á-vish,<sup>2</sup> people then. They came to see what was the matter with him, but they could not help him.

Then he sent south, and some people came from the south (now the oak and the live oak), and they tried to doctor him, but did no good. Then from the west, the tule and the pine-tree (people then) came, and tried to cure him, but in vain.

He was sick for a long time, and he called all these people, and all who were then living around him. He did not know in which month he should die, but he lingered through all the months.<sup>3</sup> In the eighth month he called them all about him, and told them that he was the one who made death. No one had ever died before, but after his death all would die too. Death would come for all. So the month was called Soym'-a-mul (or Som'-o-y-mal), Soym or Som meaning "all." It is applied to a man who in eating takes the whole of a thing into his mouth.

While Ouiot was dying, Coyote was trying to eat him. He was weeping, and Coyote licked his tears. After Ouiot died, Coyote wanted to eat the body, but the people took clubs and would not let him come

<sup>1</sup> Another version, told by another old man.

<sup>2</sup> Antares and Altair.

<sup>3</sup> The series is given as above.

near. They told him to go north to get fire. He ran a little way and came back. Then they sent him in the same way east, west, and south ; but when he looked back he saw the smoke already rising. The big blue-fly, Sar-é-wut, had made fire with the whirling-stick. That is the reason flies rub their hands together. When Coyote came back, the body was burned all but the heart. He began to cry out that he wanted to see his father, but the people clubbed him to drive him away. He still shows the marks of the clubs on his body. But he got the heart and ate it.

Just before Ouiot died, he told his people that they could kill and eat the deer. They had never killed anything before this time. And when they had killed the deer, they must take the small bones of the leg for awls to make baskets with. This was the beginning of basket-making. Spider was a woman, and it was she who must make the baskets.<sup>1</sup>

So they made awls out of the bones, and gave them to Spider, and she made a basket. The first basket was made to put the bones of Ouiot in, and they buried it and had a big fiesta. That was the beginning of the fiestas for the dead. As they burned Ouiot, so they burn clothes and other things.

The eagle was a big man and a very great captain, and Ouiot had told them that when they made this fiesta they were to kill the eagle ; and so they do. They kill the eagle, and burn the possessions of the man, and then begin to sing.

Before Ouiot died, he commanded that when they sing they should use a rattle made out of shells of turtles.<sup>2</sup>

A man (now the kingbird) was his best friend, and a very good man, and before he died Ouiot told him that he would soon return.

So kingbird got on the highest mountain near San Bernardino, and began to tell the people that Ouiot was coming back. You can still hear him saying this on the top of a tree in the early morning. He sings, " Ouiot is coming Ouiot is coming."

When the people heard him saying this, they all went out to look, and to their surprise they saw him. He came up in the shape of the Moon. After he came in the morning he went west. Kingbird alone saw him in the east. Then all the others, and Coyote first among them, saw him in the west ; and Coyote said, " Moyla has come."

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<sup>1</sup> Others say that a cicada-like insect that sings on summer evenings was the first basket-maker.

<sup>2</sup> This most primitive form of rattle, mentioned by Boscana, is still in use. It is made of two hollow land-turtle shells, the top and bottom of which are joined by finely woven milkweed twine, the two shells being fastened upon a stick for handle, and having small pebbles within.